

NEWS RELEASE



STATE OF ALABAMA Department of Industrial Relations

News For Immediate Release

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STATE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE DECLINES IN OCTOBER

MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA, November 19, 2004 Unemployment in Alabama dropped to 5.5 percent in October, compared to 5.7 percent in September, marking the first time the state jobless rate has declined in two consecutive months this year. The latest figure also matches the national unemployment rate.

“Even with the Hurricane Ivan disaster, the number of unemployed persons decreased by 4,800 overall for the month,” says Phyllis Kennedy, director of the Alabama Department of Industrial Relations. “In the part of the state that suffered the most devastating effects from Ivan, the Mobile Metropolitan Area of Mobile County and Baldwin County, the unemployment rate rose slightly, but not enough to adversely impact the overall state rate.”

2004 STATE JOBLESS RATES

January	6.0 percent
February	5.6 percent
March	5.9 percent
April	5.8 percent
May	5.9 percent
June	5.3 percent
July	5.7 percent
August	6.0 percent
September	5.7 percent
<u>October</u>	<u>5.5 percent</u>
Average	5.7 percent

Alabama posted a year-ago October 2003 unemployment rate of 5.8 percent. The latest unemployment rate of 5.5 percent represents 118,600 unemployed Alabamians, compared to 123,400 in September and 126,500 in October 2003. The comparable national unemployment rate for October is 5.5 percent, higher than September’s rate of 5.4 percent, but below the October 2003 rate of 6.0 percent.

Over the past year, there was a net gain of 14,600 jobs in wage and salary employment. The majority of the annual growth occurred in construction (+6,200), followed by professional and business services (+3,400); trade (retail and wholesale), transportation, and utilities (+2,700); educational and health services (+2,200); manufacturing (+1,600); and leisure and hospitality (+1,000).

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County unemployment rates, Metropolitan Area Unemployment Rates, and an Alabama map of county unemployment rates, are available at: <http://dir.alabama.gov>. Click on “Alabama Labor Market Information Division” under “Quick Links” and follow prompts.